1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

hammock for me. They preferred to lie half buried in the sand, both for warmth and for protection from the mosquitoes.

Some of the bolder young men asked for rum. I had none with me. All along the road I had been told that rum was the only means of inducing the Indians to dance, but an ethnologist's work cannot be based on such an approach.

Through the diplomatic efforts of Maria, the Yaruros consented to sing and dance a little. I was able to arouse their interest in my flashlight, and to arouse their modesty and bewilderment when I flashed it upon them. My compass also drew an excited jabbering circle about me. But I was not able to engage them in conversation, and finally left them about midnight with the satisfaction that at least there had been no friction.

On the following day I sent them a pig, and later in the day again visited them. They were still shy and suspicious of me, but permitted me to go about the camp examining their artifacts.

There was not much to be done in this camp. The group was in a wretched state, still in mourning for their dead, living in fear of some fresh calamity, and although they were suffering hunger, too miserable to try to go back to the river where, at least, they would find food. Tribal customs prevented my engaging the old women in conversation and the men were too young and much too affected by llanero culture to tell me about their own people. Their advice, which I took, was to go farther south where we would find other Yaruro bands among whom I could find old men who could answer any questions.

I prevailed upon the leader of the band, Estaban, to accompany me. He was reluctant to go, not wanting to be separated from his young wife, and perhaps was afraid to trust himself alone with me. However, his desire for cloth and a mosquito netting was stronger than his fear. Estaban proved a loyal and faithful companion.

We found the next band encamped on a beach by the Capanaparo River. Here they were temporarily in the employ of a llanero engaged in building a house. For several days I had no more success with them than I had had with the other band, so during that time we studied whatever was on the surface. However, I was not doing all the studying. The Yaruros were watching me closely and weighing my statements carefully. During this time Estaban was busy building up my reputation. What impressed them most was that I did not ask for their women, and that all I wanted to do was to talk with them about themselves.

One night their attitude suddenly changed. I had been sitting for hours on the sands in the midst of these people, waiting for them to give me a sign of friendliness, but they were silent and apparently

7: Leeds E-4, 5 (1958) 1964 SS19 Yaruro SS19

B) Petrullo restricted his visits to the sand banks along and in the river, and, after his first arrival, most of his travelling was done on the streams. Gardens are never to be found on the sand banks and bars, but rather, usually, on the affluent creeks which are just above flood level of the rivers in the rainy season. Therefore he was not in a position to see the gardens which Le Besnerais later saw in the same area when he explored back from the river.

C) Petrullo was in the llanos in the dry season when the Yaruro move nearer the rivers both to secure a water supply as the water table lowers and to avail themselves of the much more plentiful and accessible river fauna[11] at a time when vegetable harvests are reduced because of drought. He was therefore observing dry-season subsistence — and perhaps only a part of it.

D) The probability that he observed only a part of the dry-season subsistence pattern in his area is reinforced by two considerations:

1) He reports the fact that 150 Yaruro had been massacred by Venezuelans a month before his arrival (p. 181). Their response under such circumstances is, as fast as possible, to get off the land that the Venezuelans want and to move to the rivers. I myself had occasion to observe such a diaspora, occurring in response to a smaller massacre. In view of this sort of response, it is likely, therefore, that Petrullo's group was living off river resources and away from their gardens at the time of his visit.

2) Maps indicate that in the lower part of the Capanaparo River, the flooding is greater and the number and size of side creeks suitable for horticulture is smaller than upstream on any of the large rivers. In other words, the available area for garden plots is much smaller, and riverine subsistence proportionately more important. Upriver, and more especially on the Sinaruco and on the middle and upper Cunaviche and Arauca rivers, there is much more tillable ground.

"I thought you said you could not sing and were not a musico?" "Yes, that was true last week when I had the grippe, but now my grippe is better I can be a musico again." And many similar examples of the extreme caution one needed to exercise regarding negative responses in order to be sure they were not merely descriptive of the place and moment. If Petrullo asked "Do you raise crops?", his informants would most likely have said, "No, we have no crops here"; under the circumstances in which he found them.

11 The river fauna is more plentiful and accessible in dry season because, first, it is more concentrated, and, second, it is more visible. During the wet, flooding season, fish, and other animals spread even into smaller streams and out upon the watery llanos — we caught a small piranha on the grassy, watercovered plain itself. On the plains, the fish are lost among the grasses and are virtually impossible to spear or shoot with bow and arrow. The river turbulence of the rainy season, meanwhile, has brought so much mud from further upstream that many of the rivers are opaque, especially in those parts of the llanos constructed of mud rather than sandy soils. Fish and the water reptiles and manumals are well-cloaked by the murky stream. The waters and the plains clear in the dry season so that the fish are concentrated in the limpid, grassless waters of the rivers, while land animals and riparian fauna are all crowded together near the banks in their search for food and water.